

Guidelines for employing a Youth Ministry Coordinator

FOREWORD

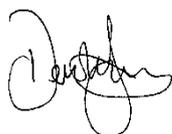
As the Church of Hexham and Newcastle, we are challenged to listen to and live out the Gospel and to build the Kingdom of God in our parishes, in our schools and in the wider community. We cannot do this without adults and young people working together and sharing their unique gifts. Just as we need their energy and youthfulness, young people also need our support and the wisdom of our experience.

Jesus Christ has given to us a great commission to 'make disciples' and to bring the 'fullness of life' to each new generation. Our world today is a changing one and we too must change and seek new ways to minister to and with young people in today's culture. We are called to be the welcoming face of Christ, always offering encouragement and support so that the Gospel may speak into the everyday lives of young people.

Young people are an inspiration and a wonderful blessing. I am greatly encouraged by the many ways the young people of our diocese share with us the good news of the Gospel message bringing us their joy, their hope and their new way of looking at things.

Our diocesan youth ministry offers young people many opportunities to experience and develop their faith and to take their place in the life and mission of our Church. As church and partnership communities seek to build a vibrant youth ministry, there are many good things happening and some areas have taken the courageous step to employ a full-time youth ministry co-ordinator. To have full-time youth ministers working in local areas is a great and welcome sign of commitment to young people.

I hope that these guidelines may be an encouragement to churches or partnerships who are reflecting on the next step in their youth ministry.



Fr Dermott Donnelly
Director of Youth Services
Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle

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AIM AND PURPOSE OF GUIDELINES

These Guidelines have been produced by the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle to assist with the appointment of Youth Ministry Coordinators

There is a growing awareness in our Diocese of the need to reach out to young people and to encourage youth ministry to grow and develop both in and out of school. Most of our secondary schools and some of our primary schools now have a School Chaplain and this part of our diocesan youth ministry is continuing to develop. Some churches, working in collaboration with others, now employ or are looking at the possibility of employing a Youth Ministry Coordinator.

The Guidelines aim to help the process involved in such appointments and to enable an effective network with a common vision to operate throughout the diocese. They also address the need to develop good employment practice and to ensure the provision of on-going development and support for those employed.

The Youth Ministry Team has an Area Development Coordinator who assists parishes in this process and who represents the Diocese at the formal stages of interview and management. The Coordinator can be contacted at YMT on 01207 592244

YOUTH MINISTRY IN THE DIOCESE OF HEXHAM AND NEWCASTLE

The evangelisation of young people is the key aim of the Department for Youth Services in the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle and we recognise that both adults and young people have a role in this process.

The diocesan youth service, the Youth Ministry Team, was set up to answer the call of Vatican II:

'The young should be the first apostles of the young, in direct contact with them, exercising the apostolate by themselves, among themselves, taking account of their social environment.'

(Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity 12)

The aim of the Youth Ministry Team is to encourage young people into a personal relationship with Christ and to bring them fully into the life of the Church. Peer ministry is at the heart of this process.

Initial proclamation of the Gospel, in a language that is creative and meaningful to today's generation of young people, takes place through school missions and outreach events. Recognising evangelisation as a process, young people are then invited to take part in retreats, festivals and other events which enable them to share common experiences and to grow in faith together. The Emmaus Youth Village is at the centre of these activities providing residential retreats for school and parish groups and a base for YMT's Gap Year Team.

Area Development is, however, essential. As parishes come together in partnerships, there is a new opportunity to consider how to respond to the needs of young people and to allow them to share their unique gifts with us. Through the support of parish or partnership groups, young people can experience a sense of belonging and are enabled to grow as valued members of the Church community in faith and service.

The training and support of adults is an important part of the development of youth ministry at local level. Although young people are the best people to evangelise their peers, they need the encouragement and help of adults. Opportunities are provided, through the setting up of local groups of co-workers, training sessions and an annual conference, for all those who are involved in ministering to young people to come together for networking and support. A Youth Ministry Coordinator, working in the local area, would have a vital contribution to make to this whole process.

THE NEED FOR YOUTH MINISTRY CO-ORDINATORS AND THE DISTINCTION WITH THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL CHAPLAIN

Many parts of our Diocese, though not all, have Catholic secondary schools. Most of these now have a school chaplain but, because young people leave school at 16 or 18 years, we are challenged to develop our youth ministry so that young people experience a sense of belonging outside of the school community.

Many young people have lost their link with Church outside of school. To set someone aside to embody that link and to meet young people where they are is one very positive way forward. In fact, given that young people are found in our schools rather than in our parish churches, schools (both primary and secondary) would be one of the important starting places for the area worker. They would collaborate with school chaplaincies to build relationships with young people and to foster parish links.

The role is parish / partnership based and is quite distinct from that of the school chaplain. A full-time school chaplain would not have the time to also work full-time in parishes. A full-time area youth ministry coordinator would link in with schools and work in partnership with chaplains.

Each local area is unique and the details of the job description will differ accordingly. However, the appointment of a Youth Ministry Coordinator will enable the parishes or partnership to respond to the needs of young people and to develop their youth ministry.

THE ROLE OF THE YOUTH MINISTRY CO-ORDINATOR

The Diocese first produced guidelines for the appointment of local area youth ministry coordinators in 2002. This was a new way to move forward in ministry to young people and was a response to the new challenges we face and a growing awareness of the need to seek new ways to reach out to young people. Each area that makes such an appointment is a

unique community and the role has developed differently according to local needs. The main aspects of the role are:

Assisting the parish / partnership communities to develop a vision for ministry to young people and to implement this

The Youth Ministry Co-ordinator will keep this process alive and a priority e.g. meeting regularly with a small group to evaluate and to develop youth ministry; encouraging the parish communities to pray; having open meetings and workshops; communicating information.

Being a facilitator to work with other parishioners

The appointment of a Youth Ministry Co-ordinator is not a 'magic wand'. They will support, inspire and empower all those who work with young people, and seek to involve new volunteers.

Being a focal point for young people

The Youth Ministry Co-ordinator will inspire and encourage young people and develop youth programmes for different ages offering a 'holistic' experience of prayer and worship; social action and service to others; and a sense of community.

Fostering parish-school links

Many young people have lost their connection with Church outside of the Catholic school. The Youth Ministry Co-ordinator invites young people to experience belonging within their local Church community. School is one of the important starting places to build relationships with young people and to develop links with parish.

THE ROLE OF THE CHILDREN'S MINISTRY COORDINATOR

More recently, some primary schools and their feeder parishes have been exploring the particular role of a Children's Ministry Coordinator. This role seeks to strengthen the links between primary school and parish and to develop an integrated strategy providing a range of opportunities for children and their families. For some families, the Catholic school is their only point of contact with Church and so the partnership between the church communities and the school is vital. The Children's Ministry Coordinator works closely with the churches and their primary schools and is involved in the transition to secondary school.

THE ROLE OF THE MANAGEMENT GROUP

The Youth or Children's Ministry Coordinator will be employed by the Diocesan Company.

To ensure both accountability on the part of the worker and support on the part of the employer, they will be directly responsible to a Management Group which must be set up by those involved in the vision and funding of the post in the local area. The Diocesan Area Development Coordinator represents the Diocese on the Management Group.

The Management Group will need to consider and organise appropriate resources e.g. a base, office facilities, administrative support, budget, travel expenses etc.

The Management Group will meet regularly. The Youth Ministry Coordinator will report at each meeting and the Management Group will work with the Coordinator to evaluate and discuss priorities for action. A line manager must be appointed to provide a weekly contact point for the worker and act as a sounding board. The line manager will be part of the Management Group.

NEEDS OF THE PARISH/DEANERY

The needs of young people in our parishes and partnerships must be identified. At Baptism the baby is told: 'The Christian Community welcomes you with great joy.' What are the experiences of belonging that follow that moment? How are we reaching out to young people? Where are the 'gaps' in our ongoing 'welcome' to young people? How can we develop an ongoing programme of faith development which offers sacramental preparation as part of a process? What about the young people who have lost contact with Church? How can we re-connect with our youth? How can we train and support parishioners to work with young people? How can young people be enabled to contribute their unique gifts?

Is there a need for someone to co-ordinate and develop our youth ministry?

This question may be addressed by the Partnership Development Group and/or a group comprising priests of the local area and others who share responsibility for the Church's ministry to young people, such as headteachers, school chaplains, catechists, parents and all those working with young people.

Once the 'vision' has been shared, the process of responding to it can begin. Realistic aims and objectives must be considered, addressing important questions such as:

- Why do we want to employ a youth ministry coordinator?
- What are our expectations of a youth coordinator?
- What support are we going to give to the person appointed?
- How can we fund this post?

JOB DESCRIPTION AND PERSONAL SPECIFICATION

Once the consultation process has been completed and a decision has been taken to go ahead, the Diocesan Area Development Coordinator must be invited to be part of the working group established to draw up a job description and a person specification. The Diocesan Human Resources (HR) Manager should also be consulted as early as possible.

FUNDING FOR THE ROLE

Funding is a vital component of this venture. The parishes proposing to employ a youth ministry coordinator must demonstrate to the Diocesan Board of Directors that they are able to provide both a professional salary and a support infrastructure. As well as the salary and on-costs of the post, other resources need to be provided such as budget, office accommodation, administrative support and expenses. Current salary scales, and details of on-costs and compulsory pension arrangements are available from the HR Manager.

One of the most successful ways of helping to fund the post has been to invite parishioners to pledge £5 or £10 each month. The groundwork involved in sharing the vision with parish communities has resulted in a greater understanding and 'ownership' of this role. The Catholic schools involved have also supported the initiative in many ways. Advice and suggestions of how to move forward with funding, including examples of handouts for parishioners and relevant forms are available.

PARISH/PARTNERSHIP INTENTION TO APPOINT A YOUTH MINISTRY CO-ORDINATOR

When the parish/partnership is ready to make the appointment, it is important that all participants sign and agree to this at the outset. Participants must be aware of all of the elements of the cost and the need for sustainability (gross pay, employer's National Insurance, pension, increments, mileage, expenses, training and recruitment costs, setting up and running costs of an office). Form A (Appendix 1) must be submitted to the Diocese at this time. A representative of the clergy and those involved in the funding of the post must submit their proposal in full to the Chief Operating Officer for Diocesan approval.

If the post is approved the HR Manager will oversee the process of selection and appointment.

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

Once the proposal has been accepted, the working group will identify the selection panel who will work with the HR Manager to advertise and recruit for the role. An application pack will be prepared for the post which will include:

- An application form
- A job description and personal specification for the post*
- Background information about the Diocese
- Information about our Diocesan Youth Ministry
- Description of the parishes* including the needs of the young people that have been identified.

**Information to be prepared by the panel*

Advertising

The post will be advertised as a minimum in relevant diocesan parishes, Universal Jobmatch (the Department for Work and Pensions Online Service) and on the Diocesan and YMT websites. Consideration will also be given to newspaper and other forms of advertising. However, costs for this should be included in the budget.

The HR Manager will place the job advert after agreeing this with the selection panel.

Short-listing and Interview

In consultation with the HR Manager, dates will also be agreed for short-listing and interviews. The HR Manager will attend these meetings in an advisory capacity.

The HR Manager will notify candidates of date of interview, venue, etc. and send for appropriate references.

Appointment

After the interviews the HR Manager will confirm the appointment in writing to the successful candidate. This offer will be subject to receipt of appropriate references, evidence of qualifications and a DBS check.

The HR Manager will give feedback to the unsuccessful candidates if requested.

Induction Process

The new employee will receive an induction to their post during the first month of their appointment. They will be shown around the area and introduced to the relevant people in the parishes and schools. The line manager, in conjunction with the HR Manager, will ensure that the employee is introduced to the work of the Company, its structure and working practices and to the specific requirements of the post.

Probationary Period

There is a probationary period of six months for the post as stated in the contract of employment. Following the first five months of employment the line manager will arrange a formal probationary interview with the Youth Ministry Coordinator. The HR Manager will provide the relevant guidance to complete this process.

Support, Training and On-going Formation

The Management Group provides on-going support through regular meetings and through the line manager who needs to be easily accessed by the Youth Ministry Coordinator.

Time and funding should also be made available for courses/learning experiences which are relevant both to the personal development of the Youth Ministry Coordinator and the development of their work.

The Diocesan Area Development Coordinator will hold regular meetings with the Youth Ministry Coordinators working in the Diocese and, where appropriate, will foster links with the school chaplains' network.

Evaluation

Evaluation is essential to the development of the role. At least every twelve months, a meeting should take place to review what has happened; to look at the original job description; to assess developments; and to agree a plan of action. The appraisal meeting should be honest and constructive.

EMPLOYMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

The Diocesan Company will undertake and manage the statutory employment responsibilities and the payment of salary. This includes issuing a Contract of Employment and an Employee Handbook to the newly appointed Coordinator which details the terms and conditions of employment, including compulsory pension requirements. A Human Resources Manual is issued to the line manager to support them throughout the employment relationship.

Participating schools and parishes will be billed quarterly in arrears.

EXPENSES

Employees are entitled to claim authorised expenses in accordance with the Diocesan Expenses Policy. Details are available from the Department for Finance (☎ 0191 243 3300). These should be submitted on the prescribed form (available in the policy booklet) to the parish/partnership correspondent for payment at the end of each month. The correspondent must settle these claims directly.

USEFUL CONTACTS

YMT Area Development Coordinator - ☎ 01207 592244

Diocesan HR Manager - ☎ 0191 243 3301 Email: human.resources@diocesehn.org.uk